

Message Text

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SUBJECT:FRANCO-SOVIET CIVIL AVIATION DOCUMENTS

REF: (A) STATE 57434, (B) STATE 26043

1. IN AN ARTICLE ENTITLED "DEVELOPMENT OF COOPERATION,"
THE SOVIET NEWSPAPER "VOZDUZHNYI TRANSPORT" ANNOUNCED -
MARCH 8 THAT FRANCE AND THE SOVIET UNION HAD SIGNED MARCH 7
IN MOSCOW DOCUMENTS ON THE FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL
AVIATION COOPERATION. ACCORDING TO THE ARTICLE, THE
DOCUMENTS FORESEE THE EXPANSION OF THE NETWORK OF AIR
ROUTES, AN INCREASE IN THE FREQUENCY OF FLIGHTS ON EXISTING
ROUTES, AND THE USE OF THE WIDE-BODIED AIRBUS A-300 AND
THE IL-86.

2. ALTHOUGH HE HIMSELF HAD RECEIVED ONLY A CURSORY BRIEF-
ING ON THE DOCUMENTS, SINCE THE FRENCH DELEGATION OPERATED
INDEPENDENTLY OF THE FRENCH EMBASSY, AN OFFICER OF THE
FRENCH COMMERCIAL MISSION WAS ABLE TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL
DETAILS. ACCORDING TO HIM, THE DOCUMENTS (1) SPECIFY THAT
FROM AN UNDETERMINED DATE, ALL AEROFLOT FLIGHTS WILL BE
DIRECTED TO AND FROM CHARLES DE GAULLE AIRPORT IN PARIS,
RATHER THAN DIVIDED BETWEEN ORLY AND CHARLES DE GAULLE
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AIRPORTS, AS HAD BEEN THE CASE IN THE PAST; (2) SPECIFY
THAT FROM JUNE 1, 1978, AIR FRANCE AND AEROFLOT WILL
JOINTLY OPERATE A NEW ROUTE, PARIS-MOSCOW-KIEV, USING
AEROFLOT AIRCRAFT, BUT WITH THE FINANCIAL ARRANGEMENTS
(POOLING OR OTHERWISE) STILL TO BE NEGOTIATED;
AND (3) INCLUDE AN AGREEMENT ON CHARTER OPERATIONS, WITH
THE DETAILS UNKNOWN. ACCORDING TO HIM, THE DOCUMENTS

STATE THAT FROM APRIL 1, 1978, THE AIRBUS A-300 AND THE IL-86 CAN BE USED. FREQUENCIES, HOWEVER, HAVE NOT YET BEEN NEGOTIATED AND THE FRENCH COMMERCIAL OFFICER CAUTIONED THAT THE AGREEMENT DID NOT MEAN THAT THESE AIRCRAFT WOULD NECESSARILY BE USED. FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WILL TAKE PLACE DURING MARCH ON THE OUTSTANDING ISSUES.

3. COMMENT: THE FRANCO-SOVIET DOCUMENTS ARE PARTICULARLY INTERESTING IN LIGHT OF THE RECENTLY CONCLUDED US-SOVIET INTERIM AGREEMENT ON CIVIL AVIATION. THE FRENCH MANAGED TO GAIN SOVIET AGREEMENT TO THE USE OF WIDE-BODIED AIRCRAFT FROM A DATE ONE YEAR EARLIER THAN THE U.S. STARTING DATE (APRIL 1, 1978 VERSUS APRIL 1, 1979). WE WERE UNABLE TO LEARN -- BECAUSE OUR SOURCE DID NOT KNOW -- WHAT, IF ANY, TRADE-OFFS WERE INVOLVED IN FRENCH ACHIEVEMENT OF THE EARLIER DATE. ACCORDING TO VICTOR SHUMSKIY, AN AEROFLOT CHIEF INSPECTOR, WITH WHOM EMBASSY OFFICER SPOKE AT A RECEPTION MARCH 10, HOWEVER, THE FRENCH SUCCEEDED DUE TO THE FACT THAT FRANCO-SOVIET CIVIL AVIATION RELATIONS ARE PROCEEDING MORE SMOOTHLY AT PRESENT THAN ARE US-SOVIET CIVIL AVIATION RELATIONS. HE DECLINED, HOWEVER, TO GO INTO DETAIL.

4. ALSO, WE COULD NOT FIND OUT WHETHER THE FRENCH PRESSED FOR EXPANDED CHARTER OPERATIONS DURING THE NEGOTIATION, NOR WHETHER THE SOVIETS PURSUED THE SAME POLICY OF ASKING FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INCREASED SCHEDULED FREQUENCIES IN EXCHANGE FOR EXPANDED CHARTER OPERATIONS DURING THE NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE FRENCH AS THEY HAD WITH US. IF THE SOVIETS DID, THEN IT CAN BE EXPECTED THAT THEY WILL CONTINUE TO PRESS HARD FOR THE "BALANCE" (OR THEIR CURRENT ADVANTAGE) IN SCHEDULED AND CHARTER FLIGHTS, AS EXPRESSED IN REF B PARA 2, DURING THE US-SOVIET CIVIL AIR NEGOTIATIONS PLANNED FOR LATER THIS YEAR.

5. WOULD APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY PARIS CAN DEVELOP ON THESE MATTERS. TOON

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